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Viewing cable 09GUAYAQUIL97, ECUADORIAN ELECTORAL OBSERVER ORGANIZATION WILL

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09GUAYAQUIL97**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09GUAYAQUIL97	2009-04-24 22:58	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Consulate Guayaquil

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.eluniverso.com/2011/04/20/1/1355/cable-204110.html>

VZCZCXYZ0002
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHGL #0097/01 1142258
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 242258Z APR 09
FM AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9804
INFO RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 1005

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUAYAQUIL 000097

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/24/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [XM](#) [EC](#) [KDEM](#)
SUBJECT: ECUADORIAN ELECTORAL OBSERVER ORGANIZATION WILL
DEPLOY LARGE FORCE IN FACE OF SOME CONCERNS

REF: QUITO 283

Clas...

id: 204110
date: 4/24/2009 22:58

refid: 09GUAYAQUIL97
origin: Consulate Guayaquil
classification: CONFIDENTIAL
destination: 09QUITO283
header:
VZCZCXYZ0002
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHGL #0097/01 1142258
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 242258Z APR 09
FM AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9804
INFO RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 1005

----- header ends -----

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUAYAQUIL 000097

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/24/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [XM](#) [EC](#) [KDEM](#)
SUBJECT: ECUADORIAN ELECTORAL OBSERVER ORGANIZATION WILL
DEPLOY LARGE FORCE IN FACE OF SOME CONCERNS

REF: QUITO 283

Classified By: CONSUL GENERAL DOUGLAS M. GRIFFITHS FOR REASONS

1.4(B) AND (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY. In the run-up to the general elections in Ecuador on April 26, 2009, Participacion Ciudadana (PC) has prepared 8400 youth volunteers to serve as election observers. In Guayas province, 1452 volunteer observers and supervisors have been trained and equipped to assist the organization's 30-person technical staff in monitoring the general elections that will select candidates for 5,964 positions, including Ecuador's President, Vice President, and members of both the National and Provincial Assemblies. In conversations with mission officers in Quito and Guayaquil, PC officials were largely optimistic that these elections would be free and fair. However, our contacts reiterated concerns about campaign finance violations on the part of the Correa government (reftel), and the blurring of lines between Correa the President and Correa the Candidate. PC is also concerned about unpublicized last-minute changes to the vote counting process that would give newly created intermediary electoral tribunals more authority on vote counting and reduce control of ballots and tally sheets. END SUMMARY.

12. (U) ConGen officers met with Participacion Ciudadana Technical Advisor, Ana Fajardo, on April 20, 2009, to discuss the organization's plans to observe the upcoming general elections. At the national level, Participacion Ciudadana has recruited 8400 youth volunteers; most of whom are between 18-25 years old. Nationally, Participacion Ciudadana's 30-member technical staff has led efforts to recruit, train, and equip volunteer observers. Initial training and information sessions in Quito with the organization's team provided regional and provincial team leaders with the knowledge and resources to engage local youth in their respective electoral districts. From there, each provincial team leader hosted information sessions, recruited volunteers, organized an election-day simulation, and conducted pre-election training days before the vote.

13. (C) Although Participacion Ciudadana's staff does not expect serious deficiencies in Ecuador's electoral process, they did express some concern about the role of the newly created intermediary juntas, which are tasked with reviewing tally sheets from each precinct. PC Guayaquil told us that the intermediary juntas would have the authority to annul the results of the tally sheets. However in an April 23 meeting, Participacion Ciudadana contacts in Quito contradicted this assessment and explained that the role of the intermediary

juntas would be to review the tally sheets and decide which ones were not valid. Only the next step up the chain, the provincial juntas, would be empowered to make the final decision after evaluating each tally sheet recommended for annulment. With only two days before the election, formal rules establishing the role and scope of authority of these intermediary juntas had not yet been released.

¶4. (C) PC contacts are also concerned about a last-minute change in the chain of custody of election materials. Unlike past elections, the tally sheets will be separated from their respective ballot boxes and passed directly to precinct coordinators. In the past, these tally sheets would have traveled with the sealed ballot boxes to the provincial juntas under military escort. By separating these tally sheets from the ballots, the electoral council has created a potential vulnerability in the electoral process. Further cause for concern is the fact that this change was made at the last minute, and has not been announced to the public.

¶5. (U) Since its establishment in 2002, USAID partner organization Participacion Ciudadana has led domestic election observation and campaign monitoring efforts. On Election Day, Participacion Ciudadana will have a noticeable presence. Observers will provide information to the call center independently at three times during the day, at poll opening (6:30 a.m.), mid-day, and poll closing (5:00 p.m.). Instead of relying on exit poll data, Participacion Ciudadana will conduct its own quick-count at 8,000 randomly sampled precincts, and report this information to Quito. In case of technical difficulties or other problems reporting to the call center, observers can log-on online to provide their status reports and complete the end of day quick-count.

¶6. (C) The role of the respected and autonomous observer Participacion Ciudadana will be of particular importance in these elections. Ecuador's new Electoral Council (CNE) has yet to prove itself as a neutral body. It has not consistently spoken out against questionable practices by the government in circumventing strict campaign spending limits. It has not commented on government-controlled media's electoral coverage that has devoted considerably more air

time to government candidates. It made a serious error in leaving out three major political parties in a sample ballot published in Guayaquil on Sunday (reftel). The introduction of intermediary juntas may indeed speed delivery and counting of ballots, but it introduces a level of uncertainty into the process, and the CNE's failure to clearly communicate the roles and procedures of the juntas is cause for concern.

GRIFFITHS

=====CABLE ENDS=====